

up into the tree to dislodge them. Then they would make a flight of as far as 150 yards. Their food seems to be entirely of leaves, but they chew it so thoroughly that it is hard to tell.

THE CHEMOSIT

BY A. BLAYNEY PERCIVAL

Amongst the weird animals that have been reported from various parts of British East Africa is the chemosit or chimiset or Nandi bear. This animal was referred to by Mr. Hobley in his paper on 'Some Unidentified Beasts,' where he quoted Mr. Geoffrey Williams' account of it.

I have heard of it from several people who have resided in the neighbourhood of the Nandi forests, as well as from the local natives.

The stories vary to a very large extent, but the following points seem to agree. The animal is of fairly large size, it stands on its hind legs at times, is nocturnal, very fierce, kills man or animals.

In most stories the resemblance to a monkey of sorts is very noticeable, but the fact that the animal is nocturnal, a point on which all native accounts agree, at once makes this impossible.

There is only one account that I know of in which the animal has been killed, and that comes from the Maraquet district; it is said that at one time one of these animals was so bad that great preparations were made to kill it, and at last it was killed by a party of men who put a dummy man in the doorway of a hut and sat inside and waited till the animal came and tried to take the dummy; it was then shot with arrows. This is supposed to have happened fairly recently.

Personally, I am quite in the dark about the beast, and am still a bit doubtful about its existence as a new animal.

During my many years in Africa I have investigated so many stories of this sort and in the end found that the real

thing was something that would have been easy to identify if it had been seen by a naturalist who would have noted the more valuable points by which one could have easily got an idea of what it was ; as it is we have no description, that is of any value, either from white man or native.

An example of a weird animal was the beast described to me in the Sotik country ; the name I forget, but the description was very similar to that of the chimiset.

Fair size—my pointer dog being given as about its size ; stood on hind legs ; was very savage.

Careful inquiries and a picture of the ratel settled the matter, then out came the information that it was light on the back and dark below, points that would have settled it at once. My own view of the chimiset is that it consists of a number of animals.

The chimpanzee as a base, ratel, leopard, lion, baboon, bush pig, and hunting dog ; amongst the natives the stories are, I think, half legendary and are kept alive by any cases of persons or cattle being killed in any out-of-the-way manner. Amongst white men on the Plateau or in the Nandi district any animal that cannot be recognised is apt to be put down at once to the ' undescribed ' animal.

The strongest point in favour of there being such an animal is that it has a native name, and appears to be well known amongst the Nandi.

Should anyone see it, please note the tracks, as they would be of the greatest value and would more or less settle the whole question.

I look upon the reports from the Nandi and from Magadi as referring to totally different animals, and they should not be considered together.